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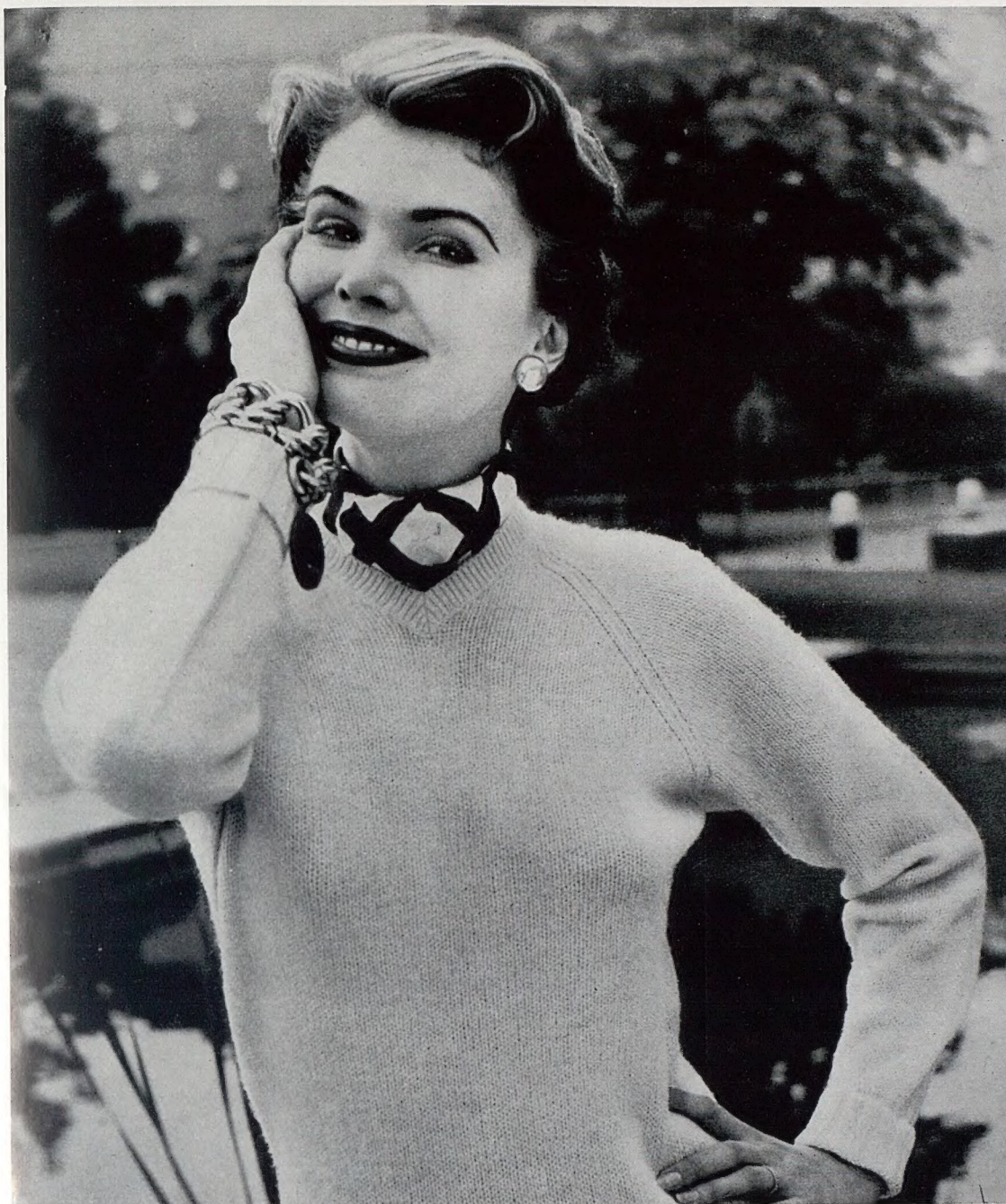


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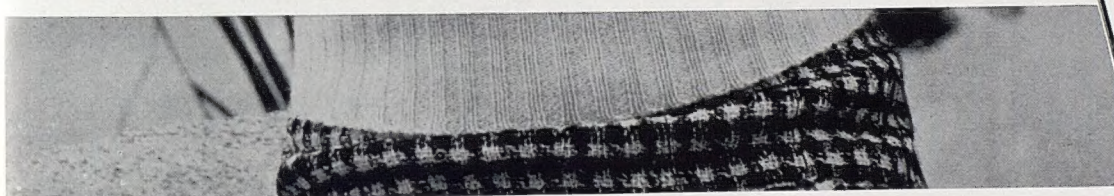
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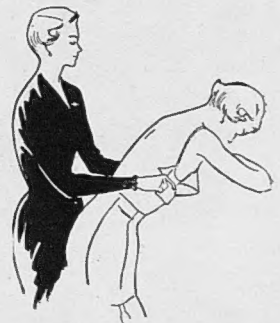
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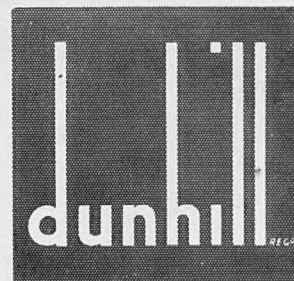
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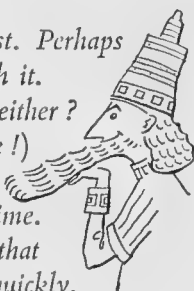
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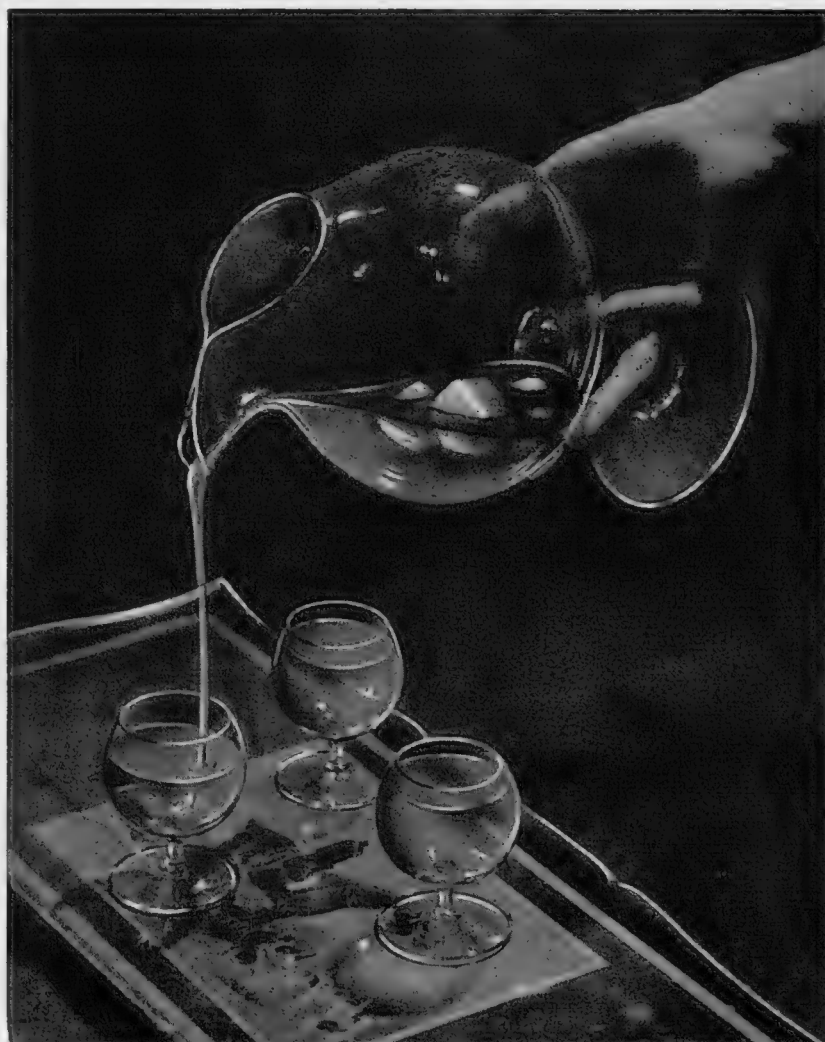
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Betty Swaebe

LADY MELCHETT AND HER CHILDREN

PHOTOGRAPHED in their home at Wilton Row, Chelsea, are Lady Melchett and her children, the Hon. Peter Mond, aged six, and the Hon. Kerena Mond, who is three. Before her marriage, in 1947, Lady Melchett was Miss Sonia Elizabeth Graham, the daughter of Lt.-Col. R. H. Graham. Her husband, the third Baron, served during the war in the Air Branch of the R.N.V.R.

A DANCE IN MAYFAIR ON MICHAELMAS EVE

*M*ANY débutantes of this year and last attended a Michaelmas Dance at the May Fair Hotel. It followed the pattern of the private subscription dance given for young people in the spring, and proved even more successful, being an ideal prelude to the social pleasures of the autumn and winter



Behind, Miss Lynne Koelle, Mr. Martin Kenyon, Mr. W. Farrer and Miss Carmen Pena. In front, Miss Mary Goodfellow and Mr. Paddy Warren



Miss Hilda Oriel, Miss Roisine Preston and Mr. Adrian Grant-Morris were among the happy company in Berkeley Street



Air/Cdre. Alan Bett with the hostess and organizer, Elizabeth Countess of Bandon, and her daughter, Lady Jennifer Bernard



Miss Helen de Bertodano was sitting out for a time with Mr. Giles Montagu-Pollock before going back to the ballroom



Miss Annabella Craze, Miss Maureen Lyle-Purdy and Mr. Gerald Cooper taking a glass of wine together while watching their friends arrive for this very good dance



Mr. and Mrs. Ian Traill, two of the young marrieds who, as well as débutantes and their escorts, were well represented



Miss Heather Arnold, Mr. Clem Mitford, Mr. Colin Murray and Miss Doriel Samuelson were awaiting the result of the lucky draw with high expectation

Swaebe



SIR JOHN ROTHENSTEIN, Director and Keeper of the Tate Gallery since 1938, will publish his Report next Friday. So important is this distinguished and finely illustrated document that even the very moment of its appearance (2 p.m.) has been laid down officially, for already the news hounds are on the track. But Sir John—"Bunny" to his contemporaries at Bedales—is no dealer in sensations. In the turmoil

surrounding his decisions as a guardian of the nation's artistic taste and conscience he remains, as ever, shy, unruffled and decisively astute in the execution of his duty. His father, Sir William, was one of the master draughtsmen of his generation, and his son has inherited the same irreproachable feeling for style. As a publicist for art he has no equal in this country, which is, of course, precisely as it should be

Around the Town

—Critics

STEAMING down the Mediterranean on her maiden voyage to Australia, the latest addition to the P. & O. passenger fleet—the 29,600 tons s.s. *Iberia*—should be one of the most comfortable ships afloat. A few days before she sailed from Tilbury I lunched on board with her officers and directors of the line and made an extensive tour of her amenities.

When one sets out on a voyage of several weeks' duration it is important to know that the feeding will be good. The meal to which we were entertained suggested that food on the *Iberia* will be of high quality, well but simply cooked and excellently served. This latter

aspect is made easier in both the first-class and tourist saloons by the liberal supply of small serving stands, each with its own heating arrangements—one for each steward, who is expected to serve no more than six persons.

THE public rooms are attractively laid out with contemporary decorations and furnishings designed by many leading exponents of this art. The cabins-de-luxe, situated amidships high up on B deck, give a great air of spaciousness and their layout and complete equipment has been carried out by the Bath Cabinet Makers, who deserve high praise for the quality of the craftsmanship which has gone into them.

In the rest of the cabins there is a pre-

dominance of light polished woods, with green, and some reds and yellows, in the hangings and bedcovers. Indeed, throughout the ship the use of light woods gives an air of comfort and restfulness. The most unusual of the public rooms is a semi-elliptical observation lounge situated immediately beneath the bridge, with long windows round the full sweep of the forward curve to allow an uninterrupted view to passengers relaxing in red, blue and green covered armchairs facing outboard.

I WAS also much impressed by the care which has been paid to the layout and equipment of the laundry and kitchens. Many a shore-based hotelier could greatly envy the

conditions created by the P. & O. naval architect, Mr. G. Denholm, in these and other respects.

Mr. Denholm, who accompanied me on my tour, has spent twenty-five years designing ships for the P. & O. and ventured the view that this might well be the last passenger ship he would build. He based this view on a conviction that by the time the present fleet has had its normal span of life at sea, passengers would all be travelling by air.

Personally, I hope Mr. Denholm is wrong. Air travel is fine if speed is the prime consideration, but for the long journey give me the comfort and leisure of a well-run ship; and one got the impression that that is just what the passengers on the Iberia are now experiencing.

★ ★ ★

DRIVING down to Tilbury I found myself again inveighing against the shortsightedness of the policy which led the authorities to make so many of our arterial roads so ridiculously, and dangerously, narrow.

Struggling down the Commercial and East India Dock roads is always a nightmare. But when one eventually emerges on to the Tilbury and Southend road it might be expected that a four-lane highway would carry the mighty stream of heavy trucks and fast-moving motor cars. Not at all.

The ground is there available for the much-needed expansion, but the road—all that the Treasury was prepared to finance—is a miserable two-lane affair on which a single breakdown can create a block miles long.

Tilbury has become one of our leading ports. It is really little less than criminal that it should be so ill-served both by road and rail communications.

★ ★ ★

By the invitation of M. de Fay, who is responsible for a new cabaret entertainment figuring the Can-Can in a big way, I dropped into Oddenino's on a recent evening, and found myself quite well entertained. But somehow I could not help remembering with a touch of nostalgia my first visit there with a school chum more years ago than I like to count up.

In those days the supper room was upstairs on the street level and the great draw of the moment was Melville Gideon singing charming little songs at the piano.

Yvonne Arnaud was captivating all male

GRANDFATHER'S DIRGE

*Today is the twilight of the goddesses.
At my age, you're fully entitled to think
me a bore,
But if you had seen them, stately,
gliding like ships,
Through the stage-door
You would know why I hate the slacks
and sweaters, the snipping
Of hair and shirts, and recall the days
of the drama
Of bounteous curves, when a woman
was really a woman,
Without Diorama.*

—LORNA WOOD

hearts in *The Girl In The Taxi* and my chum and I determined that we should take her out to supper. To facilitate this operation I regret to say that I purloined and pawned one of my father's scarf pins.

Clad in our first dinner jackets, we anxiously awaited the arrival of Miss Arnaud, who had insisted that she could come out with us only if she brought her mother. We must have looked a very odd party as we approached the best table in the room near to the dais on which Gideon performed.

I also seem to recall that our hospitality did not extend beyond a large bottle of Perrier (water, not Jouet). And when the supper and entertainment were ended we put Miss Arnaud and her mother into a taxi and sent them home to Edith Road.

One of Melville Gideon's most popular songs at that time was a little number called "They Catch Them Young," developing the theme that the girls catch the males "before their little wisdom teeth they've managed to cut."

Poor Miss Arnaud! I've often wondered since how she felt about that little party at Oddie's.

★ ★ ★

DURING the last week of the season's fun and games in the Festival Gardens, the manufacturers of a product designed to make tough meat tenderer held a barbecue on the banks of the lake. Here Sergeant Milton A. Eidson, of the U.S. Air Force, who has been roasting animals over the open charcoal fire since the age of seven, presided over the feast.

Sgt. Eidson had laid on five hogs for the

occasion and had begun his cooking operations in the middle of the previous night. Whether the fire was too hot or the "tenderizer" too efficient was not entirely clear. But it seems that the hogs had come to eating point too early for the feast and others had had to be obtained for a second cooking.

For those who like to eat pork in the open air the party was undoubtedly a success. And Sgt. Eidson, who comes from South Carolina, born of Cherokee stock, presided and served with great charm and liberality. A little bouncing around in "doggem cars" in the funfair gardens after the party aided digestion.

★ ★ ★

I WAS quite glad, none the less, that I had made a date with Peter Razouvaieff for noon the following day to try his mint juleps. Peter, who has devoted his life since he left the Army in 1917 to mixing cocktails, carries on his life work at his bar in the Aperitif Grill, in Jermyn Street. Before he came to London he was fixing cocktails in India, Australia, Malaya and Egypt. A couple of years ago he was one of a team of three representing Britain at the European International Cocktail Competition in Turin. He has also written an admirable little book in which he reveals his recipes.

Incidentally I know nowhere in London where they can cook and serve a steak Diane quite so tender and deliciously flavoured as they do at the Aperitif, under the watchful eye of Leo, the *maitre d'hôtel*. For those feeling a trifle frail after a late night in London there can surely be no better prescription than a well-made mint julep and a really thin steak, cooked in the frying-pan beside the table, under one's very nose.

I would like to take Sgt. Eidson there one day, just for a change from his own admirable barbecues.

★ ★ ★

ALL over the world people are blaming the bad weather on the atom bomb, but the Spaniards are going one better by elaborating this theme.

A friend of mine who has recently spent two weeks on the Costa Brava said that the weather was wonderful—hot sun, cloudless sky, no wind. However, if a cloud the size of the palm of a man's hand dared to appear on the horizon, the Spanish peasants would shake their fists and cry, "Ah! the atom bomb and the Americans."



Arranging Final Details For The Charity Premiere Of "Modern Times"

Elizabeth Countess of Bandon addressing the committee meeting. Supporting her are Lady Beddow-Rees, Mrs. Frankland Moore, Mr. M. C. Morton and Mr. J. Pole. The premiere of this Chaplin revival is at the London Pavilion tomorrow

Mrs. K. Caparne, Mrs. Kluger, from Montreal, and Dr. Roland Bramley were among those at the meeting, which took place at 14 South Audley Street



Miss B. Joy and Miss Mary Paton had a fine view of the course from the hilltop. There were twenty-eight competitors, including all members of the British team for the Games at Basle



Miss Bridget Hall, Col. and Mrs. W. S. P. Alexander and Annabella Alexander were others enjoying their afternoon in the country



Standing by the fence were Miss Carol Armitage, Miss Diana Marshall, Miss Elizabeth Armitage, Capt. D. H. F. Reynolds and Capt. C. P. K. Humphreys

JUMPERS COMPETED AMID BRACKEN OF TWESELDOWN



Capt. J. Cameron-Hayes, the amateur jockey, was one of the judges. With him was Mrs. Cameron-Hayes



They were looking at Miss M. Hough clearing it in fine style on Bambi V. Although the obstacles were very stiff, the going was all that could be wished

FAIR weather, with frequent sunshine, favoured the Army's One Day Event at Tweseldown, near Aldershot. On the bracken and heather-covered hillside spectators watched Major F. W. C. Weldon, captain of the British team for the European Games, win this exhaustive test



Miss Jane Gieve and Miss Sarah Merriman had come over from Guildford, their special interest being the cross-country event. Dressage and show jumping were also on the day's programme



Miss Shirley Clifford and her horse Second Son, who were placed third in the novice class



Miss Christina Duncan, Mrs. Christopher Deverell and Miss Janet Duncan had taken up position near one of the many well-sited jumps

Desmond O'Neill

AT THE THEATRE

Craftsmen At Work

[Illustrations]
by Emmwood

THE BOGUS MAJOR, at *Table Number Seven*, is one of Eric Portman's most brilliant characterizations, and playing opposite him, Margaret Leighton makes the greatest sacrifice possible to a beautiful actress. She submerges herself in the pitiable and unattractive character of Miss Railton-Bell, a personality crushed by a dominant mother

MR. TERENCE RATTIGAN's *Separate Tables*, at the St. James's, two new short plays about desperately lonely people struggling to free themselves from their pathetic predicaments in the same genteel Bournemouth hotel, are skilfully written. Where they swerve away from excellence the swerve is deliberate and managed with skill. They are also skilfully acted and skilfully produced. The evening is indeed all that theatrical skill can make it.

The acting is dominated by Mr. Eric Portman. He is in the more melodramatic play a rough, kind-hearted drunk whose career as a Labour politician has been ruined by a wife he has been imprisoned for trying to kill. She was a coldly teasing charmer who preyed on his overwhelming love for her; and though the warm-hearted, sensible manageress of the hotel is now his mistress, that love remains with him an incurable passion. The charmer happens, as he supposes by mere coincidence, to visit the hotel where he is staying. They go over the past together and he finds himself unable to resist her old arts.

But the wife suffers an unexpected check in her moment of triumph. The manageress, an understandably jealous mistress, points out that she must be lying when she pretends that her visit to the hotel is accidental. Volcanically disillusioned, the husband again manhandles her.

HE comes to his senses next morning and listens with slow receptiveness while the manageress, who has repented of her jealousy, explains to him that his wife is in real need of him. Her loneliness and her marked fear of old age has driven her to drugs. She may destroy him again, but without his help she will certainly destroy herself. The curtain falls on an uneasy reunion.

We can accept this more or less happy ending as true, but we cannot help feeling that the centre of the story has slipped into the scene between the two women which Mr. Rattigan has deliberately suppressed. Once the manageress has made her difficult decision in that non-existent scene the reconciliation of husband and wife

loses some of its interest for us, and we are not told how she came to make it. Mr. Portman vividly renders the ravaging effects of powerful passions and stubborn decencies struggling in the mind of a lonely, disillusioned man. Miss Margaret Leighton is the woman in deadly fright of herself and of what she is about to become—a performance unrealistic in some ways but shot through with flashes of insight; and Miss Beryl Measor suggests exactly the kind of affectionate warmth that hides behind the mistress's calm managerial exterior.

IN the second play, much the better of the two, Mr. Rattigan shows how strangely moving the ridiculous can be in the light of a sympathetic mind. Hero and heroine are ridiculous. He, the son of a sergeant-major, has claimed so often that he went from Sandhurst into a crack regiment that he has almost begun to believe that he did. He has thrown in a classical education and assumed the sort of accent that he confidently believes goes with these and like claims. Now, poor man, he is trying to keep from his fellow guests a copy of the local paper recording his misbehaviour in a cinema. But nobody can keep such things from the hotel dragon, masterfully represented by Miss Phyllis Neilson-Terry. To the dragon's daughter—a woman who has allowed her mother to turn her into a ridiculous spinster and hysteric, presented unsparingly by Miss Leighton—he explains that his lies and his sexual deviations are due to his life-long fear of life. That is the bond between them, he supposes.

MR. PORTMAN catches the character of this man to the life, devising just the right accent to convey both his ridiculousness and pathos.

Would such a man, however, find the courage to go on living in the same hotel? We can well believe that he would if given the proper dramatic encouragement. But it is a little hard to believe that a word from the manageress (the same manageress who bedevils the first story) would do the trick for him. Mr. Rattigan assures us that it would, and play and character are alike too good for us to cavil overmuch on the point.

—Anthony Cookman



MISS MEACHAM (May Hallatt) brings a breezy air from the racecourse into the tormented atmosphere of the Beauregard Hotel



Author And Mother At "Separate Tables"

MR. TERENCE RATTIGAN escorted his mother, Mrs. Vera Rattigan, to the first night of his new play *Separate Tables* at the St. James's. They were gratified at the enthusiastic reception it was accorded. An earlier experiment with a double programme by Mr. Rattigan was *Playbill* which appeared in 1948

London Limelight



Anna Russell playing an Irish harp

A Mistress Of Parody

ANNA RUSSELL has been heralded with the grim announcement that she is "the funniest woman on earth," a declaration I would forbid my publicists to use were I contemplating entry to her market place. Admirers of Miss Lillie or Miss Grenfell or even of Miss O'Shea should contain their wrathful zeal and add the newcomer to their collection for she is indeed outrageously funny.

Her line is parody, the lampooning of every school of singing from Lieder to Sullivan. Miss Russell's equipment for this task is twofold and impeccable on either count; she has a powerful and well-trained voice, for she started her career with serious musical intentions and would clearly have succeeded in her attempt but for her second asset, a sense of the ridiculous.

What a rare and happy combination. There are far too many large ladies who sing well and only one, it seems, who finds the fact supremely funny.

"THEATRE PROGRAMME" (Muller, 15s.) is a work compiled by J. C. Trewin, an enthusiast, from the writings of his fellow zealots. All the gang are present, Brown, Darlington, Cookman, Hobson, Lambert—a star cast of dramatic critics.

The result, to other voracious theatre-goers, is properly exhilarating, for each man takes a theme, "The Verse Drama," "Modern Acting," and so forth, and each rides his hobbyhorse as if he were getting into the straight after Tattenham Corner.

I found myself in profound disagreement with nearly fifty per cent of these urgent utterances, but this was an added pleasure to an evening when no other curtain rose.

"NO NEWS FROM FATHER" at the Cambridge Theatre received a pasting from the pundits for reasons which are obscure to me. As a boisterous farce it seemed a deal more lively than some of its contemporaries, and there is a "drunk" scene in the second act which is worth noting.

I have never understood why inebriation should be side-splitting on the stage and either boring or embarrassing in real life. This particular specimen is remarkable because it involves several characters performing a series of complicated manoeuvres, and students should note their technique, especially the skill of the director Warren Jenkins, who has devised the splendidly hilarious drill for his team. The author has contributed precious little to this interlude, but it is the highlight of the evening, and well worth the price of admission.

—Youngman Carter

DINING OUT



Three Clubs For The Notebook

CLUBS in London are legion, ranging from the large and famous to the small and furtive. Somewhere in between are the small, intimate sort of clubs which, because they have always been run in a proper manner and by the right sort of people, have survived successfully for many years, whereas thousands of the dubious variety have sprung up and died away again, as they well deserved.

There are many excellent clubs in which to wine and dine where you can enjoy an atmosphere different from that of the ordinary run of restaurants. Here are three of them, all of which, like Mistinguette, have stood the test of time, all with entirely different personalities, patrons and prices.

THE RENAISSANCE CLUB, Harrington Road, S.W.7, for example, has been running for fifteen years. It consists of one large room with a high roof like a barn, with lots of pictures round the walls, some of them for sale.

IT is a gay place, especially for young people, where they can dance to a two-man band, dine by candlelight, and spend the evening for a very reasonable price.

There are two bars where you can obtain bitter from the barrel and eight wines by the glass from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. The food is straightforward and one can get an excellent dinner for 8s. 6d. They are very proud of their fillet steaks, not without reason, as that considerable authority on the gastronomic arts, M. Jean Conil, can quite often be observed consuming them in person on the premises.

THE PHEASANTRY, in King's Road, has been going for twenty-three years. It is an extraordinary building, and part of it was once a shooting lodge belonging to Charles II. Décor is bright, gay and amusing, and the chef is Italian, so that one can get all the Italian specialities at their best. There are some excellent French wines and some fine vintage ports but the basis of the cellar could be described as "Chianti galore." One can dance here to a radiogram which is played at full bore and keeps everybody wide awake, and generally adds to the gaiety of nations.

THE HANSTOWN CLUB, 1 Hans Street, S.W.1, is definitely a smart club. No music, no dancing, no noise, and strictly limited membership because the accent is on comfort, conversation and cuisine. The quality of the Hanstown may well be measured by the fact that on several occasions André Simon has published in the *Wine and Food Society Quarterly* details of some of the meals he has enjoyed at this club, meals which had been prepared with considerable skill by their maître chef, M. Casantiéri.

LIBRARY NOTE: *Good Housekeeping Menus*, a slim but handsome volume, really mouth-watering, produced at 10s. 6d. by the National Magazine Co. It makes an intelligent division of dishes for the seasons and has a section devoted to party menus which I shall present discreetly to every hostess of my acquaintance.

As a profound believer in savouries at this time of year, I commend attention to the virtues of their recipe for fried marrow with mushrooms.

-I. Bickerstaff



Miss Sheila Mathers was being partnered by Mr. Anthony Taylor in one of the dances which opened the programme



Air Marshal Sir Hugh Walmsley was having a drink with Mrs. Turner and Dr. E. M. Turner, Commodore of the Club



Mr. and Mrs. H. J. E. Smith chatting with Mrs. and Major R. S. Clifton while waiting for the dancing to start

Gabor Denes

BUSY YACHTING SEASON ENDED

THE Royal Southern Yacht Club ended a most successful season with a dinner and dance at the Polygon Hotel, Southampton. A message of good wishes was sent by the Duke of Edinburgh, who is Admiral of the Club



Masters of the Palette

by Baron

"A.J." SIR ALFRED MUNNINGS, K.C.V.O., past-President of the Royal Academy, brings a breath of fresh air which some would describe as a hurricane into the atmosphere of artistic controversy. His clear and direct East Anglian honesty—for he is a native of Suffolk, Freeman of Norwich and domiciled in Essex—shows in all his work, and perhaps most of all in his magnificent handling of horseflesh on canvas. Even those who strongly dissent from his opinions on modern art, admire the vigour with which he attacks all workmanship which happens in his view to be slipshod



BARBARA RUSH plays an Irish girl in her latest Technicolor film for Universal-International, *Captain Lightfoot*, in which she stars—for the third time this year—with Rock Hudson. The picture is being made almost entirely in Ireland

At The Pictures

This Romeo Jests At Scars

IT is not surprising that Mr. Rank's *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Renato Castellani, won the first international prize at the Venice Film Festival. It is the sort of film which, as it spreads culture among the masses (and no doubt earns "saint-seducing gold" at the box-office), gives a glow of virtue to the film industry.

Quite rightly, too. It is a splendid achievement, superbly produced in colour, competently acted, well directed and photographed. In many ways it is the best Shakespeare film yet. It must be seen.

Having awarded our nosegay, let us now join the fray. The scholars complain that the text has been mauled. It has. But tell me how otherwise Shakespeare's quart would fit Rank's pint pot.

Do they want just a record of the stage play photographed with a sound camera? The film medium is primarily visual. Shakespeare is primarily verbal. It is no use for Shakespeare to banish Romeo with a verse. We film-goers must watch Romeo button his hose, climb on his horse and ride off to Padua. In Padua we must have a look at the art director's fine set. So it goes on. It all takes time. It is what you pay for at the pictures.

Whether Shakespeare should be adapted for the screen at all is another question, one recommended for educative family discussion. Include me out.

The question now is: have the least wounding cuts been made? Here we can argue till the cows come home. One must regret the Queen Mab passage, fairy companion of our schooldays. And one wonders if Mercutio's part had to be so savaged that he hardly survives as a character; so much so that his murder scarcely justifies the anger which sweeps Romeo into revenge on Tybalt. I feel a little unkind, too, about the few interpolations. They might have been made to scan properly.

However, something had to go. Shakespeare is so generous a poet that enough plot and verse remain to feast your eye and ear for two hours and eighteen minutes.

For his Juliet, Castellani picked Susan Shentall. She had no stage experience. He wanted a fresh young girl pliable enough to shape to his idea of Juliet. This idea must have corresponded closely to the real-life Miss Shentall. She remains her

Television

Virtuosi At The Fireside



SEVERAL occasions this week conspire to make even diehards covet an H-shaped aerial or at least a seat by the screen. Viewers to-morrow night will have their chance to see which Party was wiser: Labour, to play the modest violet and refuse facilities offered to televise members at their Party Conference; or the Conservatives, to have the courage of confidence and let the country look in on theirs.

Another national service that TV is uniquely equipped to provide is the series of celebrity concerts which began last week with the super-fine pianist, Claudio Arrau. To-night's celebrity is

'cellist Piatigorski, next Wednesday's Gioconda da Vita, who has made Brahms' violin concerto almost her signature tune. Coming Wednesdays will bring to our firesides Myra Hess, Isaac Stern, Moiseiwitsch and Menuhin himself. Opinions may differ about the televising of musical events; to point and follow, or stand back and admire. Nobody surely would dispute the privilege of seeing and hearing artists of this calibre at close quarters.

AN attraction in the same class may be Sunday's glimpse of the Paris Opera Ballet, whose moving spirit is Serge Lifar.

—Freda Bruce Lockhart



Juliet's nurse, earthy and lovable, is played by Flora Robson

sweet self, speaking her lines beautifully and expressing Juliet's sorrows with the touching emotion of an English schoolgirl. It is an agreeable and often moving conception. No one can quarrel with its virginal fragrance. Shakespeare probably envisaged a warmer-blooded heroine, but then he was not a Neapolitan like Signor Castellani.

LAURENCE HARVEY's Romeo is competent, but no more. Certainly Romeo was a dreamy, "star-crossed" character. But I would like a bit more of the old Adam than Harvey allows him.

Flora Robson, as the Nurse, gives us the best of fun. I almost said the part might have been written for her. Mervyn Johns makes an entertaining Friar Laurence. Sebastian Cabot brings Capulet to noisy life. All parts are played with discipline and distinction.

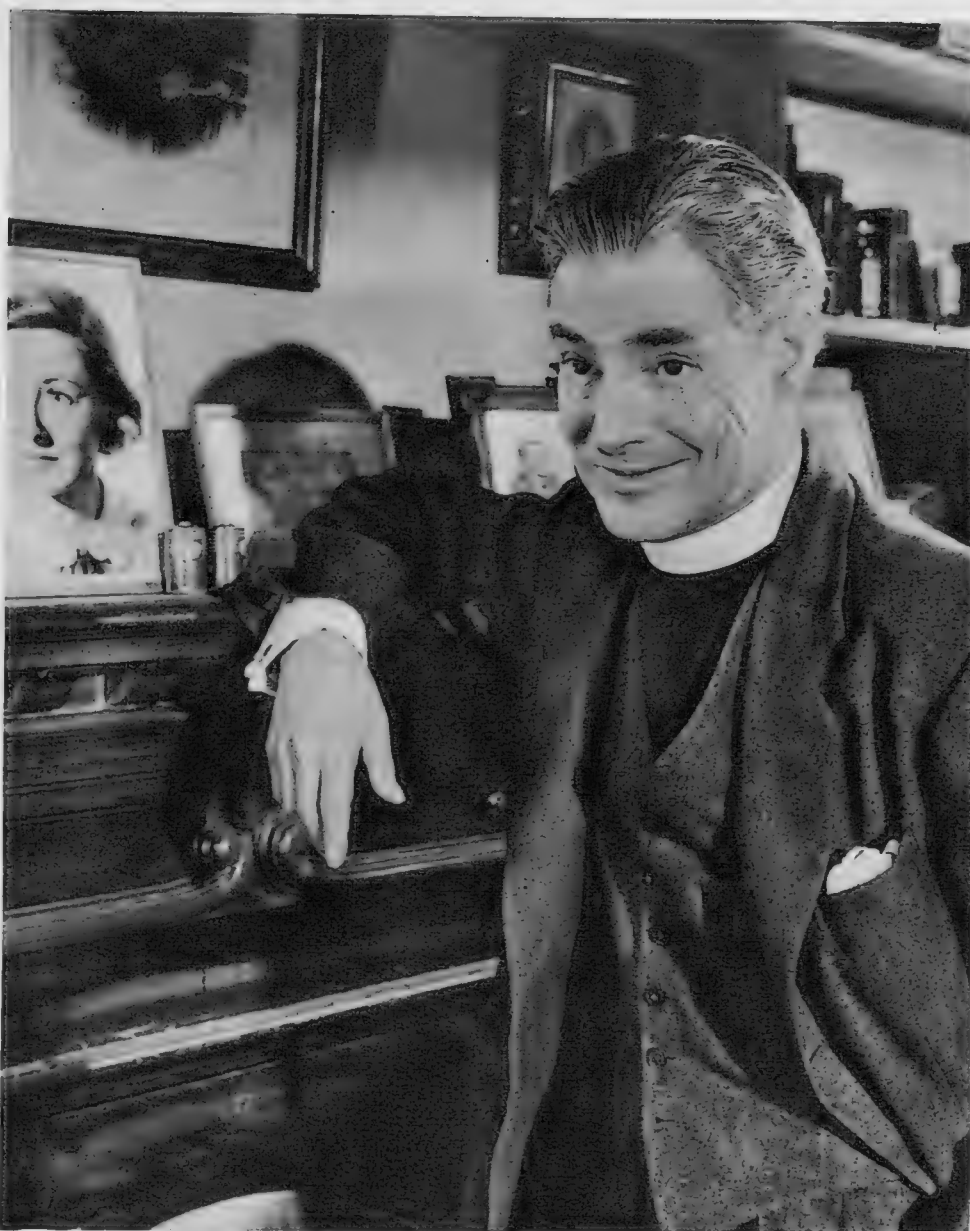
But the greatest distinction is in the production. Visually it is a delight. It was shot largely in Italy in appropriate architectural settings. Here Castellani's education as an architect pays off. Some locations are so happily chosen and so lovely in themselves that, while their beauty is fit company for the poetry, their reality is distracting. Off we go again. *Vide above, play v. film.*

The safest conclusion for me to make is that if Romeo has to be filmed, it would be difficult to better this attempt.

A GOOD, straightforward adventure film about a U.S. aircraft-carrier in the Korean war is to be seen in *Men of the Fighting Lady*. Browned-off with the war, which is put to them as a "police" or "fire brigade" exercise, the air crew dislike risking their lives daily. There is plenty of action and thrills in the air. Capable performances from Van Johnson, Walter Pidgeon, Keenen Wynn, Frank Lovejoy and others. No ladies.

Take your handkerchief if you go to see Greer Garson having a rough time as the only woman teacher of a boys' boarding-school in *Her Twelve Men*. Of course, she makes the grade, and the little devils finally present her with a hefty coffee-pot. Since Robert Ryan is about as the handsome, misogynist house-master you may have one guess as to the ultimate residence of the coffee-pot.

—Dennis W. Clarke



ROBERT DONAT makes a welcome return to the screen in the part of the controversial Vicar of Hinton St. John, who becomes the innocent victim of scandal, in *Lease of Life*. The film is produced for Ealing Studios by Michael Balcon

Gramophone Notes

A Diaghilev Ballet Suite



ALL who remember the glory of the Diaghilev Ballet Company will doubtless appreciate the recent recording of Poulenc's Ballet Suite "Les Biches," which was first produced in Monte Carlo in 1924, with Nemchinova and Woizikowsky in the rôles later danced by Markova and Dolin. Under the title of "The House Party," it was revived in 1937.

It has fallen to the lot of the London Symphony Orchestra, with Fistoulari conducting, to present this suite, which is gay and witty, even to-day, when so many half-hearted attempts are being made to deceive ourselves that

we really are able to recapture the high spirits of the 'twenties. Though Poulenc is, of course, not to be confined to a period, being a composer of enduring reputation with a vein of poetry all his own.

THE coupling is handed to Fauré's "Dolly Suite," which may have a certain appeal for some. It is given a workmanlike though consistently placid performance and does not appear to me to be the right companion for "Les Biches," which the orchestra and conductor bring to life with polish, poise and humour. (Parlophone P.M.C. 1004.)

—Robert Tredinnick

AN AUTUMN WEDDING AT CHESTER SQUARE



Marie Louise Pelissier and Harriet Pelissier, two of the smallest bridal attendants, watched with interest as the guests began to arrive for the reception



Mr. M. Thompson, Miss J. Thompson and Mr. P. J. Warren recalled details of the ceremony



Mrs. J. R. Hoade, Mr. G. S. Royds, Mrs. D. Walman, a sister of the bridegroom, and Mr. J. R. Hoade received the guests on their arrival at Londonderry House

AT St. Michael's Church, Chester Square, S.W., Mr. Nicholas Royds, son of Mr. G. S. Royds, of Arlington House, S.W.1, and of the late Mrs. Royds, was married to Miss Sally Hoade, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Hoade, of Cranleigh, Surrey. The reception was held at Londonderry House



Mr. Peter Hicks and Miss Judy Archibald were among those who came to bring good wishes



Mrs. G. J. Akroyd, Mr. R. Berens, Mr. G. J. Akroyd and Miss B. Brooks greeted a group of friends at the reception



Mr. Nicholas Royds and his bride, still bearing traces of confetti, made their way up the wide staircase at Londonderry House before the earliest of their guests had arrived

Swache



WEDDING OF THE YEAR in Venice was between Mlle. Anne Marie La Cloche, daughter of Countess Volpi, and Prince Francesco Aldobrandini, who are seen leaving the church of San Benedetto after the ceremony

Priscilla in Paris

An Aviator's Great Play

THAT the first real première of the autumn season should take place in mid-September seemed quite an innovation. It is the time of year when Parisians are passing through their lovely city from sea or mountain *en route* for the *vendanges* or the killing of little birds! Town abodes are barely open. Carpets are still rolled up and curtains not back from the cleaners. Innumerable lovelies murmured distractedly that they had "nothing to wear," but this, of course, was a mere cliché, and the usual crowd turned up at the Michodière Theatre, radiant in looks and elegant in apparel.

Mme. Gabrielle Dorziat, great lady of the stage and screen who, in private life, is the

comtesse de Zogheb, personified the most recent ukase of fashion by wearing a wonderful wrap of bronze-coloured silk. Mme. Mary Marquet also exhibited one of the new, ample coats that will be so helpful when "finishing-up" last season's gowns! Many of the evening frocks were ankle-length and soberly black, but worn with beautiful jewels and voluminous, pastel-tinted scarves. These also are helpful in camouflaging the details of a bodice that is not quite of this autumn's vintage.

HIDE-ALL coats and swathing scarves! The great *couturiers* are being kind to us. Perhaps they realise that just now our money-boxes are not chinking too merrily when shaken. But this prattling of chiffons is irksome. At a première the play's

the thing! In this case, what a play, what a playwright and, above all, what a player!

Les Cyclones, by Jules Roy, produced and acted by Pierre Fresnay at the Théâtre de la Michodière, opens the theatrical season with an *éclat* that other theatres will find difficult to equal. The playwright is an aviator who, during the last war, spent part of his time in Great Britain as a test pilot; his most recent novel is entitled *The Navigator*, so that it was easy to surmise, even before the curtain rose, that the "Cyclones" would be airplanes and that the author knew what he was writing about.

The subject is not new. Indeed, the camera has almost worried it to death. It is the old story of the plane that breaks every record of speed and altitude but crashes without apparent reason and kills pilot after pilot. Certain that the machines are faulty, the flyers refuse to try them out any more, but one man believes in them, goes up, almost fails, but, by a miracle, grounds his Cyclone safely. His experience elucidates the mystery.

A VERY simple tale—as simple as the story of *Journey's End*—and written in the same grim, tense style lightened with those human flashes of wit that are inseparable from the most tragic situations. Throughout the evening the audience was held spellbound. Not a cough was heard, not a programme rustled, the lovelies who wore too many beads muffled their jingling without being scowled at, and even our most captious critic, who usually pretends to go to sleep, forgot to nod.

For some years now Pierre Fresnay has been acclaimed as the finest of France's actor-managers. To have created such an atmosphere of suspense as we experienced in *Cyclones* is a masterpiece of production. As an actor he has also surpassed himself. There are other great French actors, of course, and in the more immediate past there have been Lucien Guitry, Coquelin, Raimu and—at times—Signoret, whose magnificent acting will always be remembered by those who saw them. In their greatness, however, they were "of the earth, earthy." In Fresnay's interpretation of a rôle one feels the intangible presence of the soul. It is this, I believe, that sets him so surely in a place of his own, apart.

WHEN leaving the theatre I met Marcel Idzkowski and his attractive wife and was able to congratulate him on his recent nomination as *Chevalier* of the Legion of Honour. Kiki—as he is known to his many friends—is the *secrétaire général* of the Comédie Française. He is also a brilliant chronicler of the doings of his contemporaries, and a clever story-teller and writer. No gala is complete unless he is there to turn the spotlight of his witty comments on the long-suffering stars who so dutifully perform at these affairs for charity's sweet sake. One is glad he has been honoured.

Enfin!

● Tototte buys Toto two new ties. Toto puts one on. "Oh!" weeps Tototte. "Don't you like the other one?"

SUN-TANNED ON THE GOLDEN LIDO

THOUGH this country has entered into the "season of mists," the warmer South continues to enjoy an almost perpetual holiday. Venice still attracts many visitors and on the Lido are to be found tourists from every nation taking the sun



On the Excelsior Beach, Mr. John Galliher, Princess Kyra Troubetzkoy, Prince Constantin Hohenlohe-Langenburg and Signorina Annemaria Borletti rest after their swim



Left :
Marchese and Marchesa Salina, with her sons Gian Luca and Andrea, and Mr. Simon Tozer, from Trinity College, Cambridge, were sitting on the bow of a rowing-boat



Right :
Taking a late holiday in Venice, Princess "Bunny" Esterhazy and Prince Tassilo Furstenberg were in the middle of a lighthearted conversation on a quiet stretch of this famous beach

SCONE RACES CROWNED THE SCOTTISH SEASON

VARYING weather makes little difference to the habitués of the Perth Hunt Meeting, the top and crown of Scottish steeplechasing, which this year brought again full cards and a distinguished attendance. On each of the two days there were six races on the Old Course at Scone Palace, providing some of the keenest and most enjoyable riding seen in the North this year



The third race on the second day was the Scone Novices' Hurdle, in which Mr. J. Bruce's *Little Stranger* (F. Gomez up) won, closely attended by H. Vaux's *Mr. Trumper*, ridden by S. McComb, and Mr. A. Calder's *Hans*.



Mr. Stewart Stevens, Lord Forteviot and Mr. Neil Henderson were three more at this good meeting



Right to left: Mr. Grant Clark, Miss Janet Parker, Mr. James I. Van Thol, Miss E. Van Thol, Miss Gay Daldy and Mr. James I. Van Thol, the younger set, of whom there were many present to



The Earl of Mansfield, owner of Scone Palace and the course, in conversation with Col. A. V. Holt



Capt. Malcolm Wombwell and Lt.-Gen. Sir Colin M. Barber, who is C.-in-C., Scottish Command



Lord Kinnaid, who had come over from Rossie Priory, Inchtute, talking to Mrs. James' Prain



Lady Munro, Mrs. Kenneth Hunter and the Earl of Strathmore, nephew of the Queen Mother



men in progress. favourite, Mrs. t, owner-ridden



Innes, among racing



Lady Daphne Cadogan and Lady Sarah Cadogan, daughters of Earl and Countess Cadogan, were comparing their selections with those of Mr. Roderick Bloomfield



D. B. Wyndham Lewis

Standing By ...

COMRADE FEDYAYEV and Comrade Perfilyev are leading street-beggars in Leningrad. Comrade Fedyayev makes about 100 roubles (£9) a day, and Comrade Perfilyev about 150. The virtuous *Pravda* boys have been violently denouncing both comrades (*vide Press*) for making so much money. One feels nevertheless that Comrade Fedyayev cares—till the cops arrive—little, being far better off than any journalist, and Comrade Perfilyev still less.

To this promising Russian short-story opening must be added a key-fact on which Tchekhov or Gogol would have built a whole melancholy romance. It seems that Comrade Perfilyev is known to be an ex-accountant. This (to us) explains his larger income, since everyone loves and esteems those boys. "Little Red uncle," mutter the passing citizenry under their breath, "your face is mild and full of integrity, your gestures neat and restrained. You do not

squander a single kopek on women or vodka, like a beastly Stakhanovite, but after balancing your accounts in the evenings you curl up quietly in your comfortable villa with a book of poems on accountancy. Here is more money, little blameless caraway-seed. Victims of an odious nightmare, we admire and envy you." But it grieves one to think that no Russian bookish boy worthy of the name could bear to toy with the serenely-prosperous existence, so far, of Ex-Accountant Perfilyev without dragging in some tots to make merry hell of it.

Afterthought

UNDER the old bookish *régime* the unfortunate Perfilyev would fall for big trouble over some timid, angelic street-hostess with exalted eyes being hustled away by the gendarmes after a murder. Today, we fancy, one of those huge ironfaced sporting sweethearts who wrestle and run and jump for the Soviet would wreck his life on strictly ideological grounds. Tanya Tumbelova, I am not happy—why do you jump up and down on my chest, little athletic dove? Be quiet, *kulak*, American spy, Fascist cannibal, capitalist stool-pigeon, I spit on you, the political cops are coming.

A perfect story for the Bloomsbury gang, of whom the poet has sung:

Moujiks, when soft voices die,
Vibrate in the memory,
But they do not scent the air
Like the boys from Bedford Square.

Excuse this bourgeois titter.

Moo

EVEN if she hadn't had her mouth wide open, a sweetheart recently featured in a picture paper side by side with an exquisitely beautiful Jersey cow, would have made us dubious about the value of this artistic arrangement, generally speaking. It must be admitted that not every English Rose can risk such competition.

As a lover of cows we were not long ago compelled to criticise a (so-called) gentleman-farmer who had thought fit to name an entire herd of Jerseys after leading Parliamentary glamour-girls and female Cabinet charmers of the period. His defence was that big lustrous eyes and a low, sweet, musical voice are not exclusive to Westminster. We pointed out that the essence of a Jersey's appeal is not merely

ravishing good looks but a spiritual tranquillity you certainly don't find in the House. We further pointed out to him that little actresses are far too clever to have themselves photographed with cows, though you regularly see Press-photographs showing one of them in riding-kit, daintily kissing a horse on the muzzle. He replied that this is a problem for the RSPCA, Our Dumb Friends' League, and the Press-Agents' Union, and the matter dropped.

Horses are such neurotic exhibitionists that Press-agents can probably convince them very easily that they enjoy being kissed by little actresses before a camera, it has since occurred to us. No wonder the horse is dying out.

Face

AT the period—not so long ago—when the LCC's all-night trams used to hurtle at dizzying speed from Holborn to Hampstead, rolling and pitching up the Gray's Inn Road and round the curve to King's Cross like tramp steamers in ballast bucketing through a Biscay gale, a Hampstead type we knew addressed a plaintive cry in print to the then Secretary of the Tramways Department, whose name was blazoned majestically in full on the side of every tram:

Aubrey Llewelyn Coventry Fell,
When your tram rocks I don't feel well.

There was no official reaction—barring presumably a few shrugs and sneers among the top tramway brasses—and we heard later that this chap fell or was pushed off the lower deck in a coma one stormy night in Camden Town, opposite the Royal Veterinary College, which purchased the body next day for scientific purposes. We were lately reminded of this not unamusing incident by another Hampstead type's complaint to an evening paper about being nearly jerked off a bus in the Finchley Road. But times have notably changed. This citizen's real grievance, unexpressed, was obvious. Far more than the discomfort of falling on his trousers in the Finchley Road, he plainly dreaded losing face before the derisive native population.

This, a leading member of the British Colony in Hampstead tells us, is a prevailing worry among the local whites nowadays, the sequel the second time being a stiff dressing-down at the Consulate and a whip-round the Colony for a free Underground ticket home.



"... not every English Rose can risk such competition"



Mr. John Goulandris and Lady Jane Stewart, at a corner table, were amused by a scene in the cabaret. Lady Jane is the elder daughter of the Marquess of Londonderry

BUBBLE & SQUEAK

THE C.R.A. was watching a gunner subaltern doing a shoot. The subaltern was working out all his calculations on a small slide-rule with considerable speed and accuracy.

★ After observing him for a time with slight distaste, the C.R.A. suddenly snatched his slide-rule away. "Your slide-rule's been shot away. What are you going to do now?" he asked.

Without a word the subaltern felt in his battledress pocket, produced another slide-rule and carried on.

"I HAVE listened carefully to you, Mr. Davidson," said the judge, in acid tones, "for a long time, but I am none the wiser."

"I hardly expected your lordship to be," replied counsel, very politely, "but I thought you might be better informed."

At a horse fair all sorts and conditions of horses were being offered for sale. Every old crock in the county seemed to be there.

The auctioneer stood ready to start business, which looked like being rather bad. An old farmer came up with an aged steed, gone at the knees and walking on three legs.

"How much?" asked the auctioneer.

"Fifteen pounds," came the stolid reply.

The auctioneer, pained and surprised, replied:

"I want to know your price—not the weight of the animal!"

"You have a nice place here," remarked the self-invited guest, and a bore at that, after looking round the new country house, "but it looks bare."

"Oh, that's because the trees are so young," answered the host. "I hope they'll have grown to a good size before you come again."

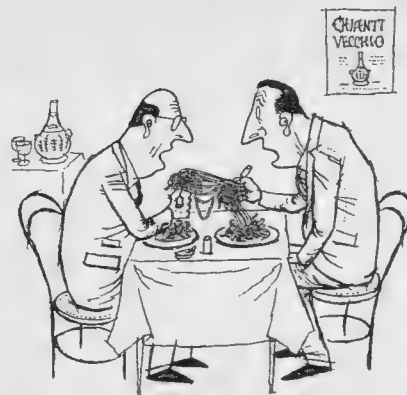
Two men at a country fair approached a shooting range, with the familiar row of little white balls bobbing up and down on a series of water jets. One paid his shilling and took his three shots, without hitting anything. Nettled, he tried again and again, without success.

DUSK FALLS EARLY —LIGHTS GO UP

AS the evenings draw in, the restaurants and night-clubs awaken to new life after the longeurs of the summer. The younger patrons, especially, will easily change the pleasures of the field for those of the dance floor. These pictures were taken at the Casanova, in Grosvenor Street



Viscountess Bearsted dancing with Capt. Richard Iwan Sarell, D.S.O., of the Royal Marines



At last his friend said: "Let's have a go." He took one shot and all the balls dropped together.

As they walked away, the unsuccessful one said: "I've never seen anything like it. How on earth did you manage it—the whole lot with one shot?"

"Quite easy," replied his friend. "I took a pot shot at the fellow working the water-pump and scared the life out of him!"

His conscience was troubling him, and at last he went to a farmer and said: "I've come to say I'm sorry. I stole a rope from you a little while ago." The farmer forgave him and he went away.

But still he had no peace of mind. For he had not told the farmer that there was a cow at the end of the rope when he stole it.

R.H.S. Autumn Show Opened At Olympia

ON the first day of the R.H.S. Autumn Show at the National Hall, fellows and associates enjoyed inspecting the outstanding exhibits that were on display. Particularly admired were the groups of perpetual flowering carnations



Mrs. E. Dickson, Miss H. E. Nicholls and Miss H. M. Hinkley were early arrivals for the great Autumn Show



Mrs. G. A. March and Mrs. F. O. March referred to the catalogue when viewing the exhibition of chrysanthemum varieties



Mrs. G. Green, J.P., with her husband, Brig. George Green, D.S.O., were two more enthusiastic visitors on the first day of the Show

Taking The Air

ON BUYING A FARM

A DOZEN years ago, lying in a hospital bed in the Canal Zone contemplating a future which had only recently become a possibility again, there was only one thing I wanted to do—buy a farm. I had never been a farmer in my life, could find no trace of one in my family shrub, and my Patron Saint, St. Crispin, was a shoemaker.

Nevertheless, this was no unique event. I discovered that practically everyone else who has reached a stage of hoping that he is now category D and therefore unfit for any further military service wants to wake up at 5 a.m. and hear the birdies say good morning.

I don't suppose anybody who wants to buy a farm from a bed in Ismailia ever gets around to actually buying one. They go back to the age-old routine of catching the 8.13 in the morning and the 5.27 in the evening—except on Fridays. It has taken me twelve years to break this

habit which I never quite got into, and I am now about to buy a farm. Or rather, my wife is.

My wife is buying a farm because she badly wants to produce mink, impelled, I suspect, by the thought that she will never get a mink coat any other way. But mink do not take up a great deal of room, although they do stink a lot, so it became necessary for me to find something which would keep all those other acres employed.

DAIRYING was out because my only previous experience of it, during a week-end visit to some friends in the country, involved pulling a new-born calf out with a rope. Dairying, as I said, is out. I got put off mushrooms by the biggest mushroom-grower in Devon, who is rapidly converting his mushroom farm to a mink farm. My wife suggested poultry, but poultry I consider dull birds and rather sickly. Then one day I ran over a duck in a village in Kent, quite near where the Prime

Minister lives, and in a flash it came to me. Ducks.

I like ducks. I like them alive and I like them dead. They don't apparently get the complicated diseases of chickens and they seem to carry on fairly intelligent conversations with each other. Also they look nice . . . an unusual combination.

EVERYTHING I have learnt about ducks since (and I have learnt quite a lot) has confirmed me in my opinion that ducks it should be. Big, fat Aylesbury ducks with pink bills, and elegant, friendly Pekins with bright yellow bills covering the green floor of our farm with white carpets.

With these beautiful thoughts filling our minds, slightly disturbed by the consideration that duck are the favourite food of mink, we set off to the West Country in search of our farm.

We knew exactly what we wanted . . . a nice period house fully modernised at great expense with at least two bathrooms, mains water and electricity, within ten miles of a large town, good schools in the neighbourhood, frequent bus and train service, 20 to 30 acres of land and a maximum of £8,000.

We thought it would take three or four days pleasant meandering around Somerset and Devon before we found our green pastures.

That was three months ago. We have just found one—in a remote spot in East Anglia.

—ROBERT CRISP

At The Races

THE SAVAGE TSAIN

A GERMAN author, Herr Lutz Heck, has written a book entitled *Animals My Adventure*, in which he claims to have reproduced both the European wild horse and that big wild ox, the Aurochs, supposed to have been extinct about 300 years ago, and last heard of in the Western Hemisphere in South-East Europe.

The Aurochs was the favourite quarry of Charlemagne and of that renowned Frankish Emperor's hard-riding daughters, who, according to the history books, were six-footers. This is all very intriguing, especially where the wild horses are concerned, because they are still quite plentiful! As to the Aurochs many people have thought that, though he may have become extinct in Europe, he still survives in other parts of the world; Burma and Java, for instance, because in those unpleasant regions they have a wild and very fierce ox called, in Burma, the Tsain, and in Java the Bantin.

I do not know what the Aurochs taped at the withers, but the Tsain goes a full seventeen

hands, and even more, as I have been told by chaps who have been lucky enough to shoot him, the only way, incidentally, in which to escape with your life, because he is the most savage and dangerous animal that haunts the jungle. He will charge the moment he gets your wind, just as will an elephant who has gone "must" or mad; only the Tsain is about twenty times as fast and very agile in spite of his bulk. Thinking of all these things raises a doubt as to whether Herr Heck has re-created the Aurochs, or merely improved upon the Tsain.

I SHOULD not think that this animal was very easy to capture alive, or to rear in captivity. I think I know one chap, at any rate, who would not volunteer to be his keeper. As to the wild horse which Herr Heck says he has re-created, he tells us that he has brought it off by crossing a Mongolian with our domestic breeds. The only Mongolian I have personally come across is the Burma pony, a mouthless, frontless creature and I have heard of the

"Chinese horse" being very much of the same type. My reading tells me that there were roughly three distinct herds that wandered westward from the Gobi Desert, all duns, with a dark donkey stripe down their backs. One of these herds hugged the shores of the Baltic, another is said to have gone through Middle Europe, and the third to have wandered through southern Europe. Whether any of them got into Arabia I should think is doubtful, because the Arab and the Barb are of a very different type.

THE Gobi Desert horse is supposed to have happened almost before history began, but as to this I leave the more learned to speak. It has been stated that the only relic of this northern herd is that stout breed of dun weight-carrying hunters with a dark donkey stripe down their back to be met with in parts of Ireland. Whether these good-lookers really trace back to that misshapen, heavy-shouldered thing I would not be prepared to say, but I should think it is doubtful.

The Burma pony I have met more or less intimately. He is very bad in front, but those who have used him and liked him say he can jump like a buck and will stay for ever.

—SABRETACHE

Sir Gordon Buys

A Yearling

ON the opening day of the yearling sales at Ballsbridge, many racing personalities thronged the paddocks, where the British Bloodstock Agency bid 4500 guineas for Sir Gordon Richards for a Ballygolan colt



Mr. R. Ilhagga, the Irish owner, with Mr. M. O'Donnell, Sir Gordon Richards and Mr. E. Stanning



Mr. Joe Balding, Mrs. Hartigan and Mr. Hubert Hartigan, who trains horses for the Aga Khan in Ireland



The Earl of Dunraven, who both sold and made several purchases, chatting to Mrs. Laurence Hastings

TWIN-SET WITH A

DIFFERENCE

WE have chosen this week Ballantyne's delightful "Chicken-wire" twin-set. Made of finest pure cashmere, it is worked with an intarsia design in white and yellow. Soft and warm and as useful as it is elegant, this twin-set is, we feel, an investment rather than an extravagance at 17½ gns. (jersey 8 gns., golfer jacket 9½ gns.). Debenham and Freebody are stocking it and sell also the other merchandise shown on these two pages.



A GOOD pleated skirt to wear with the twin-set in dark grey pure worsted pick and pick, with detachable belt. The single button fastening gives a finishing touch of trimness. It costs 6 gns.

A CHOICE FOR THE WEEK

OPPOSITE is the jacket in wear. The little velour hat trimmed with a leather band and buckle is the essence of open-air chic and cost 95s. 6d. Hand crocheted string backed gloves are 45s. 6d.







THIS Clydella Junior Sherta blouse, very trim and businesslike, is excellent out-of-school wear for any little girl. Its small broken check design can be had in six colours. Harrods' children's department



SMALL GIRL

HERE are some clothes that we think should please both mothers and daughters. The mothers will like them because they are pretty and warm and thoroughly hard-wearing. The little girls, who always adore anything that suggests being grown-up, will feel that a shirt blouse and such materials as wool tartan, cord and tweed are very grown-up indeed. The sensibly cut, white buckskin shoes are by Startrite

★ ★ ★

RIGHT: two views of Alexon's double-breasted coat, of warm Harris tweed, with velvet collar and pockets. From Selfridges children's department, who also sell the Kangol "Puffin" beret





A TARTAN pinafore dress with a fringed pocket for cracker scraps and toffees. The blouse beneath is long sleeved and buttons down the front. Both are by Horrockses Pirouette and are stocked by Marshall and Snelgrove's children's dept.

Continuing—

SMALL GIRL

THIS cosy party dress (right) of needlecord velvet with white honeycomb smocking on the bodice is a Lindsay Maid model. Although thoroughly "partied" it can put up with a lot of rough treatment and will wash and wash. Lilley and Skinner's children's shop

DIARY OF A LADY OF LIMITED LEISURE

WAS completely overwhelmed recently by the sudden receipt of an invitation to accompany a friend that very morning to a press show of a film at the Academy in Oxford Street. Needless to say, film was not of the kind that is likely to come to our local cinema, and had a respectably cultural air to it which justified my cancelling a dentist's routine appointment which has waited six months and can surely wait longer—postponing turning out my wardrobe, which has waited three—and deciding on something grilled, with rice, for dinner, followed by cheese and fruit.

These preparations are completed just in time for me to assume appropriately elegant attire and enter the cinema feeling appallingly guilty at neglecting my household duties at such an hour of the morning.

FILM turns out to be a rather haunting and serious piece about social injustice in foreign parts which I would be too lazy to go and see deliberately, but which I find impressive when it comes to the point, not the less so because the morning ends with an unexpected gathering to absorb drinks and *canapés*. During this I get into a vague con-

versation with an elegant lady whom I suspect of being a real film critic, and talk guardedly about the film.

I am so appalled with the problem of having to talk off the cuff when I have not had any reviews to guide me that I wonder for a moment if going to the pictures every morning all the week and making up one's mind whether the thing is good or bad without anything



but one's own preference to go on, is really as pleasant a profession as I had always imagined.

However, I solve the discussion problem by saying that the acting was wonderful (this is pretty safe as all the actors had shadowed high cheekbones and untidy hair and looked realistically unglamorous), but the plot rather over-simplified the problem, didn't it? I find that this, accompanied by a wide-eyed smile and a poised cocktail glass, goes down

pretty well, possibly because, as it turns out afterwards, the lady I am talking to is not a film critic at all and thinks *I* am.

Returning home slightly dazed by cinema management's refreshment, I find that the film is still haunting me, not that this is surprising as I usually emerge from the cinema dreamily following up the futures of cowboy, cop or tamed tough guy into unbelievable complications. However, on this occasion it cannot be due to audience-participation, as film was entirely about Mexican miners trying to get the same pay and conditions as white workers, while treating their wives with the contempt with which the white workers treated them.

I sit in the train brooding over these unfortunate females living in shacks, their passionate and comprehensible obsession with getting water laid on to do their washing, and the total inability of their husbands to see the point of this.

I REFLECT, guiltily, that I am considerably better off than said Mexican miners' wives, having not only running water but a washing machine and an ironer, plus a lady by the hour who can work these things when necessary; I have a machine to beat eggs and sponge-cakes and mayonnaise with, and, thanks to nylon, Terylene, etc., I do no mending and very little sewing in general. Also, thanks to American films and all that during-and-postwar propaganda about the heroism of being a housewife, my husband does half the washing up when he is at home and the domestic help isn't, and also makes exquisite early morning tea.

Still, all the same, I reflect, now feeling almost like a Mexican miner's wife, all this mass of labour-saving equipment, time-saving gadgets, and the cult of Mummy-works - so - hard - you must - do - everything-you-can-to save-her-trouble has its drawbacks. What is depressing for me about housewifery as a full-time career, I decide, is not its hardness but its dullness. Take away the hard work, as I and most of my friends have done, and you still leave the boredom.

It is just as depressing and automatic, though less exhausting, to polish with an electric polisher as with elbow grease; watching a machine churning up the washing is not



so stimulating, really, as wearing your fingers to the bone doing it yourself. The only creative satisfaction about housework, I decide, is cooking—and that is all eaten up in two-seconds and forgotten.

MY husband, I reflect, by now passionately obsessed with the injustice of my fate, may work *harder* than I do, but he gets out—meets people—is stimulated by social contacts. Whereas I, however comfortable my existence, might as well lead it in a lighthouse for all the human companionship it gives me.

I am, I decide, little but a bird in a gilded cage—and at once determine to arrange some scheme, perhaps a mild, pleasant illness, by which my husband shall stay at home for a week surrounded by all our useful dodges for doing everything, and realize—though to what end I cannot possibly imagine—how the average housewife's existence is not so much difficult as *dull*. . . .

—Diana Gillon





Beads as light as bubbles, cleverly mixed with pearls, make this lovely necklet. It costs £4 18s. 6d., and the matching ear-rings 21s. From Debenham and Freebody

An unusual and effective necklet, of adjustable size, £9 19s. 6d. Matching bracelet in four sections, £7 19s. 6d. Derry and Toms



Accents For An Evening

INTEREST for evening is focused on distinctive costume jewellery, gloves and belts, all of which can be seen in the shops in increasingly beautiful designs. The colourings, too, are lovely and give the sparkle that makes for glamour

—JEAN CLELAND



A new way of carrying your powder. Marshall and Snelgrove have this "watch" compact, price £5 5s.

Green and two shades of blue stones compose this rhinestone necklet, price £4 17s. 6d. The matching earrings £1 9s. 6d. Derry and Toms



Gold snakeskin buttoned back to the black velvet. Its price 41s. or with black velvet gold-trimmed gloves, 55s. Debenham and Freebody



Dennis Smith

SHOPPING LIST

EGGSHELLS
TO YOUR
TASTE

IN the spirit of being prepared to try anything once, I went along to a party at which—so the invitation stated—there would be a drink new to the palate of man. On arrival, in the company of fellow-journalists, I sat down in a gaily decorated room to watch the demonstration of an electric food mixer called the “Paladin.”

This consists of a heat-resisting glass goblet fitted with strong metal blades driven by an electric motor in the base, whirling at controlled speeds varying from 5,000 to 17,000 revolutions per minute.

★ ★ ★

As we watched, a number of recipes were prepared in a matter of minutes with no more effort than by turning on a switch, and in some cases, where extra speed was required, pressing a button. An outstanding feature of the “Paladin” is that it can produce vitamin-enriched drinks in which the *entire* fruits are put in, pips, peel and all, and whirled up to a frothy purée. The new drink we had been promised was a kind of egg nog, in which whole eggs were used, including the shell. This was really delicious, and far from being gritty—as you might well suppose—it was velvety smooth and creamy to taste.

★ ★ ★

WITH the “Paladin” goes a comprehensive book of recipes for making all kinds of things, from fruit cups, milk shakes, nogs and flips, to soups, sauces, mayonnaise, ice-cream, mousses and fools. As new recipes come out, these are sent to the purchasers whose names and addresses are taken and filed when they buy the machine.

Those who would like further information can get it by visiting or writing to the “Paladin” showroom, at 28 Old Brompton Road, London, S.W.7.

★ ★ ★

“ANYBODY seen my studs? Where did I put that tie? Who’s moved my cuff links?” These are familiar cries in most households, and it seems to me that a good deal of nerve strain for all concerned could be avoided by use of a new revolving tie rack, which, easily fixed to a wall, or the door of a wardrobe, keeps all this kind of tackle intact. The rack holds a number of ties, and swivels round at a touch, making them very easy to select. The tray on top is divided into sections for keeping the studs and links, etc., separately and neatly to hand.

This handy little affair can be had from Selfridges, and costs 8s. 6d.

★ ★ ★

COMFORT and beauty for a modest price seems to me a good combination. I found this in a new kind of TV cushion, which, in bolster shape, with a charming cover, and filled with feather down, is fitted with cords and a heavy weight to hang over the back of the bed or a chair.

It can be used for giving that little extra tilt to the head when looking at television, or for reading in bed. When not in use, it adds a decorative touch to the room. A good buy this for 34s. 6d. at Debenham and Freebody.

BEAUTY

Home Again! Home Again!



"I REALLY do not know which is worse," said an attractive but slightly harassed-looking mother to me yesterday, "packing to go away for a holiday, or unpacking when you come back."

Surrounded by half-empty trunks and cases, and a confusion of bathing dresses, summer frocks, spades and buckets, which littered the floor like jetsam from the sea which she had so lately left, she continued to grumble. "It's not so bad when there are only two of you, but when you have a large family of varying ages, you begin to wonder whether it wouldn't have been better to buy a rubber bathing pool, get in a load of sand, and let the children camp out in the back garden."

After helping her to tidy up, we had a cup of tea, during which another gloomy thought occurred to her. "It isn't only sorting out all the clothes, and getting the house put to rights again, it's oneself too. Well, I mean, just look at me."

So many people feel that way after a holiday. If they have been lucky enough to find some sun and acquire a tan, they no sooner get home than it begins to fade and look dingy, and then they want to get rid of it.

No wonder then that at this time of year beauty salons are full to overflowing with clients anxious to make a speedy transformation. Without a doubt, a few expert treatments form the quickest method of getting back to normal. Under the hands of skilled operators, using special preparations and masks for the purpose, the skin can be bleached and smoothed out and made to bloom again.

For a longer term policy, home methods are quite effective. You can get excellent bleaching masks all ready mixed and prepared, and all you have to do is to read the directions carefully and put them on for about a quarter of an hour when you are resting or while you are getting dressed.

In between times, a good bleaching cream—applied on alternate nights, with a nourishing skinfood to avoid drying—lightens the skin considerably.

Those who complain that they "live in the wilds" far from shops and seldom come to town can, of course, get these various home treatments—masks and bleaches—sent to them by post. Most of the well-known beauty firms make them, and it is a simple matter to write in, state your requirements and leave it to them to send the preparations accordingly.

If, however, you do not want to be bothered to do this—some people put off writing for things to the crack of doom—then you can get some simple and quite effective nature treatments from the local greengrocer, or from your own garden.

YEARS ago a famous opera singer—who, at the age of seventy, still had a complexion as delicate and soft as a rose petal—gave me a bleaching and softening recipe which she said she had used since girlhood. I have always kept it, and just to make sure that it is still in order, judged by modern standards, I took it along to a reliable dispensing chemist. His verdict was "Yes, very good." So in any case if you would like to try it out, here it is: Take two ripe cucumbers and cut them up into little chunks. Put them in a double saucepan, and just cover them with water. Allow them to simmer until they are quite soft, and then strain them through butter muslin. When all the juice has been extracted, add double the quantity of water and mix well.

Now add one teaspoon of powdered borax and allow to dissolve, then add two tablespoonsful of glycerine. Shake well, and finally add one teaspoonful of simple tincture of benzoin (which acts as a preservative) a few drops at a time. Put into a bottle, and you have a mixture which will last for some time to come. All you have to do is to dab it on to your face, after thoroughly cleansing, and allow it to dry in naturally.

The inside of cucumber rind, too, rubbed gently over the face is soothing and softening.

Another excellent bleacher and beautifier is ordinary lemon juice. This is too strong for the face, and should only be used on the neck, arms and hands. To carry on the good work, after using the juice, follow with a good lemon cream such as "Lemskin." This has not only bleaching, but nourishing properties, to counteract any drying effects.

—JEAN CLELAND



Here are Yardley's new "Lavender Bath Oil" together with Yardley "English Lavender" in a gift case of transparent plastic. Price 21s. 9d. They can be bought separately if desired



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Book Reviews

THE GREAT KHAN

Elizabeth Bowen

THE MEMOIRS OF AGA KHAN (Cassell, 21s.) offer the reader something quite unlike ordinary fare—something rich with character, and practically limitless as to subject. Here, in fact, is a book on a royal scale.

Authorship is only one more activity which the Aga Khan takes in his stride, nor is he doing so for the first time now. Few lives can have been lived so fully, so variously, so energetically or with such authority. "Never in my long life," says the Aga Khan, "have I been bored." And he conveys, to the very last of his pages, a youthful zest. This outstanding personality of our era stamps all he says with an individual viewpoint—public affairs, world-wide, have not dimmed his sense of the value of private judgment.

Legend, with its inevitable capacity for error, has since his youth surrounded this living man. The actual facts, the realities of his life-story are therefore the more worth having, and having from his own pen.

DESCENDED from a line of Persian noblemen, the Aga Khan has in his veins the purest blood of the Islamic world. Seventy years ago, on his father's death, he—then, by his own account, "a small, short sighted, solemn boy," aged eight, succeeded to the responsibilities of the Imam of the Ismaili Muslims, and to the onus of the family wealth. The sacerdotal, disciplined formality of his childhood, on his estate near Bombay, makes strange reading.

The juvenile in him only sprang out when he and a cousin of his age embarked upon a little innocent shop-lifting, soon, alas, checked by a watchful uncle. (What the little boys required was, simply, books.)

The grafting of the European idea of life into the inherited Oriental pattern is fascinatingly described in the Aga Khan's account of his evolution into manhood. He has been able to span, by his personality and by a genius for understanding, those two worlds which, said Kipling, can never meet. In the brilliant, pre-1914 Western social world all doors were open to the young prince: by now, he has witnessed change after change, on which he comments with philosophy. But essentially this was not a man content to play the part of an onlooker: the nature and the importance of the affairs in which the Aga Khan has taken a hand are formidable. Ability, experience and prestige were to fit him to play the part of "Ambassador without portfolio."

His advisory rôle, in connection with India and the Middle East, has from time to time been one of extreme gravity. His remarks on his country, on the proceedings of the Round Table Conference, and on the succession of proposed reforms and suggested compromises which preceded the British departure from India are of great value, as is his analysis of the decline of British prestige in the East. Illuminating, too, is the chapter entitled "My Work for the League of Nations." As President, in that year, of the League of Nations he opened the vast Geneva buildings which, heartbreakingly, he was to behold deserted upon the outbreak of World War Two.



"Rosier d'Amour" is one of a series of twenty-four plates in *Roses*, a selection by Eva Mannering from the flower paintings of Pierre-Joseph Redouté (circa 1820), published by the Ariel Press at 25s.

"The Islamic Concept and my Rôle as Imam" provides, as a chapter, the core of these stirring *Memoirs*.

The Aga Khan's writing about religion—his own, and its relation to others—is sincere, spiritual and lucid. He clears away, incidentally, misconceptions as to the Islamic view of marriage, which, he points out, though sacred as a human contract is, for those of his faith, not sacramental. The part played in his life by his mother and in turn his own parenthood are touched on with a traditional dignity. On the lighter side, we are invited to share his recreations and interests, including the best-known—racing. "My Career on the Turf" recapitulates splendid years. Feeling for other people has never failed.

Affection, and successive personal intimacies, has bound the Aga Khan to our Royal Family; his portraits of Edward VII, George V and the Duke of Windsor are, in particular, memorable. On debatable personalities, such as Mussolini, Gandhi and King Farouk he offers us quite unbiased comments. His interest in opera, ballet and the theatre has been, since his first years in Europe, uninterrupted. . . . These *Memoirs of Aga Khan* are too full to be summarized: they should be read. Mr. Somerset Maugham contributes a Foreword.

★ ★ ★

WHETHER, greying critics ask, are our younger novelists? The answer, in one case at least, is not far to seek. John Mortimer (born 1923) has not looked back since he published his first book, *Charade*, which I had the pleasure of reviewing in these pages. Now comes his latest, *THE NARROWING STREAM* (Collins, 10s. 6d.). Masterfully short—not because Mr. Mortimer has not much to say, but because he can convey large effects in few words—*The Narrowing Stream* has for subject a married couple upon whom is descending the shadow of middle age. Husband and wife, estranged by their own misgivings, are brought to a crisis in their relations with one another by (it seems) an outside, violent event—the death, not far from their home, of a lonely girl.



[Continuing on page 52]

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LESLEY BLANCH

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Rocks and Olives SHIRLEY DEANE

An enchanting account of life in a southern Italian mountain village. The author who lived there with her artist husband catches fully the sunny splendours of the scene and the robust humours and philosophies of the peasants. Illustrated. 12s. 6d. net.

JOHN MURRAY

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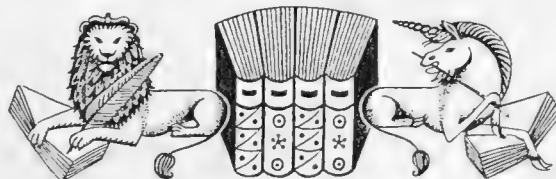
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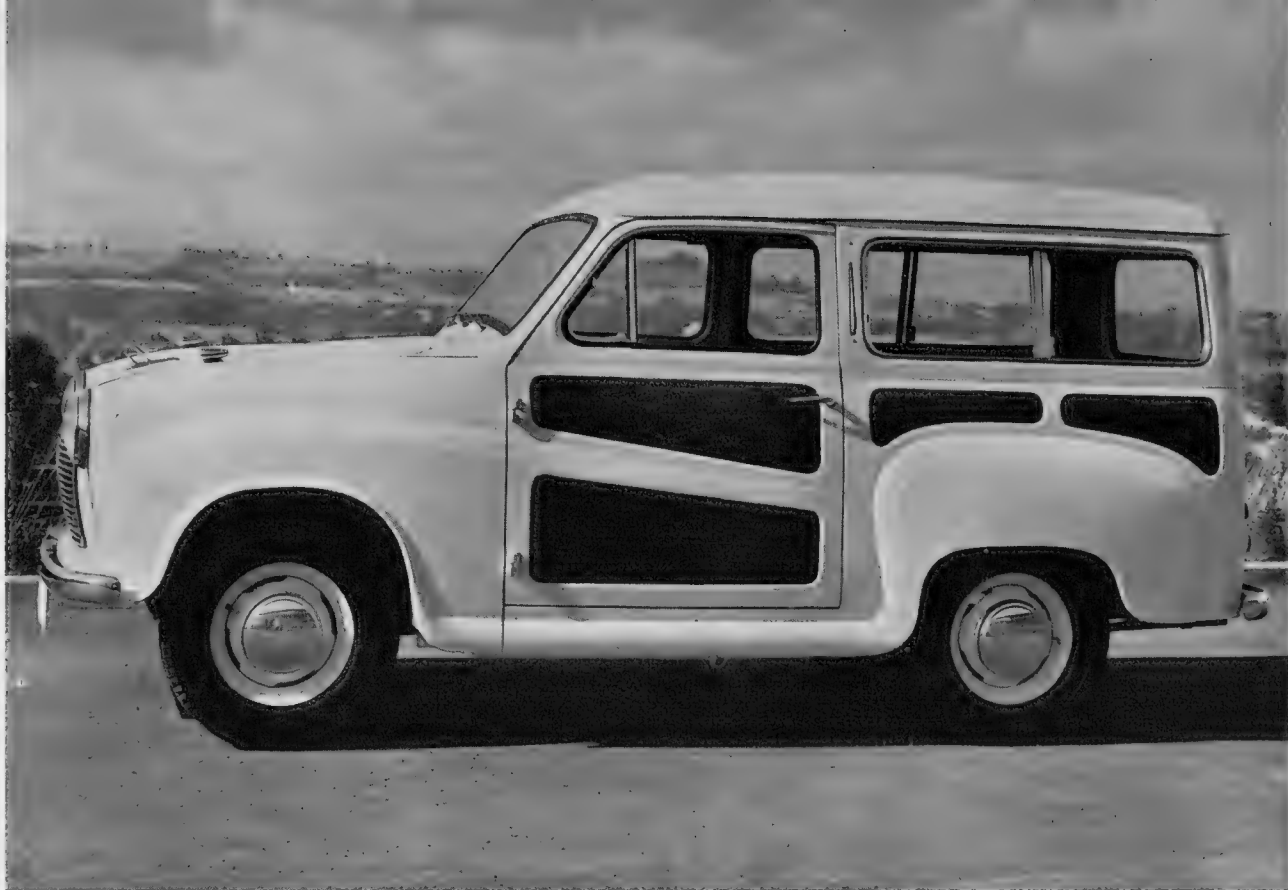
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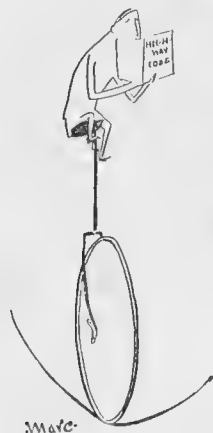
Address

Motoring

RECENT DÉBUT:
The Austin A30
Countryman made
its first appearance
at the Commercial
Vehicle Show at
Earls Court. This
new model is not-
able for its very
smart and prac-
tical appearance



What The Turbine Will Give Us



LARGE, mobile "pieces of bent tin" are again beginning to attract their annual instalment of attention. The Commercial Vehicle Show, the Paris Salon, and then the Earls Court Motor Show; they will all, in their several ways, offer proof that one of the two methods of earning public approval is to bend the tin in a different manner from last year.

Many "new" models are little more than that. Chassis specifications tend to become standardized; technical novelties are scarce. Among United States and British manufacturers in particular there is a chassis creed from which few depart.

It is, therefore, with satisfaction that one sees the Continental manufacturers, with their greater technical daring and wider experimentalism, coming back to the shows and telling us that there are still wonderful regions of automobile engineering to be explored. I have no objection to either kind of new model: to the one that consists in a changed shape or style, or to the one that consists in a changed chassis specification; but the second kind obviously offers more scope for comment.

THERE is a British maker who has lately been throwing out new engineering ideas in a manner that suggests interesting future developments. The Austin company has said that it is conducting research with a turbine-engined car with heat-exchanger. It has also announced the A30 Countryman and the new British Motor Corporation 2.2-litre, four-cylinder diesel engine.

This one company, therefore, embraces two

promising fields of future development. Let us look at them and try to find out what they have to offer. The turbine car will assuredly be smoother running than the piston-engined car. Airline pilots have taken to calling piston-engined aircraft "thumpers," and although the unevenness of the reciprocating unit can be muffled better in a car than in an aeroplane, the term will become applicable to the older models when turbine cars are on the road. The problem with turbine cars is fuel consumption. They already have smoothness. With diesel cars it is the other way about. They have good fuel consumption and the problem is to give them quietness and smoothness.

At the moment the Austin company tells me that the B.M.C. diesel is intended not for private cars but for vans and taxis. But it is a neat and not too expensive unit which, if the demand is there, will certainly be fitted to the cars in the future.

I HAVE pointed out once before that one attraction of the turbine car is that it gives, free of charge, an automatic transmission system. This year there will be more automatic transmissions than ever before. I cannot yet name the manufacturers who will be introducing them because of the "release dates" of the new models. But I can say that they will follow the American pattern.

There is nothing wrong with that pattern. It has been proved to work and to work well. But I refuse to believe that it is the only pattern or the best. The chance seems to stand out a mile for some British maker to launch a turbine car which will embody an automatic transmission. Will someone do it this year, or next? Austin has been doing much useful preliminary work. And it will be remembered that Rover began to accumulate information in this field some time ago. Of one thing we can be sure. If no British maker seizes the chance, a Continental one will.

I have spoken in general terms of the new models that may be expected during the different shows. I shall hope later to have an opportunity of examining them in more detail. The new Singer Hunter, for instance, with its use of plastics, is worthy of special attention. Then there are a number of new Rootes models of which the only one I may even mention at this date is the Hillman Husky. This is a dual purpose model of the estate car, powered by a Hillman side-valve engine.

A particularly interesting car is the Armstrong Siddeley for 1955, and here also I shall hope to give details later as the release dates roll on and space becomes available for considered treatment.

A FINAL word must be said about the new rear lights and reflectors regulations. The motoring bodies have been more than ordinarily busy in telling their members what the regulations mean, and the Automobile Association has circulated a straightforward and simple explanation.

Essentially the private motor car owner must see that his car has two red reflectors facing to the rear. The regulations say just how many inches they must be from the sides of the car, how high from the ground and so on. The aim is to define the width of the vehicle by reflectors which shall be high enough from the road to be seen easily by the drivers of oncoming cars.

The requirement that there shall be two rear lights is already met by most manufacturers. It does not apply to cars already in use although it will apply to all vehicles by October, 1956. These regulations are the outcome of the realization that accidents are sometimes caused by drivers running into the backs of stationary or slow-moving vehicles because they carry weak warning lights and reflectors to the rear. There have been bad accidents of this kind as most drivers know. The large lorry with dark-coloured back can stand beside a main road on a dark night and be almost invisible except from close range. That should no longer be possible with the new regulations, which should thus diminish one kind of usually serious accident.

Oliver Stewart

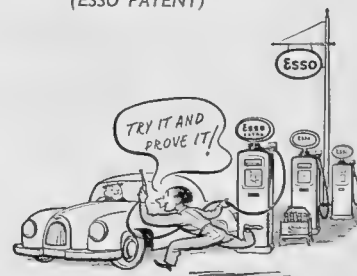


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MALTA, G.C., ACCLAIMS THE NEW GOVERNOR

SIR ROBERT LAYCOCK, who was Chief of Combined Operations during the war, was recently sworn in as Malta's thirty-seventh governor in succession to Sir Gerald Creasy. The ceremony took place with traditional pomp at the Palace in Valetta



Mrs. Trafford Smith, wife of the Lt.-Governor, Lady Laycock, Mrs. G. Borg-Olivier, wife of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Brittain, Rear-Admiral W. G. Brittain, Flag Officer Malta, and Sir Robert Laycock at the Customs House jetty



Miss Tilly Laycock, with her brother and sister, Ben, aged seven, and Emma, eleven, watching their father inspect the parade with 2/Lt. W. H. L. Wood, R.A., A.D.C.



Air Marshal B. V. Reynolds, Air Officer Commanding and Fortress Commander, with Maj.-Gen. B. Daunt, General Officer Commanding Troops

The Englishman's[★] Guide to Smirnoff Vodka



The Island Race are among the world's most discerning drinkers. They are, however, notably conservative in their tastes, preferring to stick to what they know than experiment with alien beverages of doubtful potency. Believing, however, that Englishmen[★] should share in the pleasures of cocktail imbibers in other lands, we gladly provide a few facts about the world-famous Smirnoff Vodka.

1. Smirnoff Vodka is a smooth palatable drink, no stronger than your Gin, Whisky or Rum.

2. Smirnoff Vodka is today one of America's most popular drinks, where it is used as the blending spirit for new and established cocktails as well as for long drinks.

3. Smirnoff Vodka makes a most attractive drink taken straight "à la Russe," especially when accompanied by savouries.

4. Smirnoff Vodka is made in this country according to the traditional recipe used by Pierre Smirnoff, purveyor of Vodka to the Imperial Court of Russia.

Try Smirnoff instead of Gin in your favourite cocktail. Try a VODKATINI (Smirnoff Vodka and Vermouth mixed in your favourite proportions) and a BREWDRIWER (Smirnoff Vodka and Orange Juice).

**To say nothing of the Scots, the Welsh and those of the Irish whose pleasures know no frontier.*

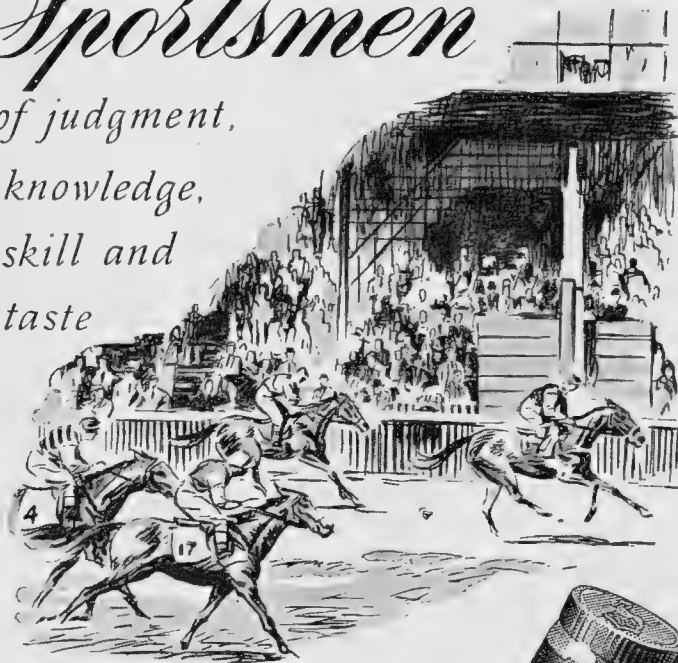
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ENGAGEMENTS



Lenore

Miss Francis Margaret Brasher, daughter of Mr. W. K. Brasher, C.B.E., and Mrs. Brasher, of Highgate, has announced her engagement to Mr. Ralph Francis Jones, son of the late Lt.-Col. C. W. F. Jones, R.A., and of Mrs. Jones, of Richmond, Yorks



Miss Diana Beaumont, daughter of Lt.-Col. the Hon. Ralph and Mrs. Beaumont, of Plas Lhwyngwern, Machynlleth, Montgomeryshire, is engaged to Sub.-Lt. Brian Robert Outhwaite, R.N., son of the late Cdr. C. R. L. Outhwaite, D.F.C., R.N.V.R., and of Mrs. Outhwaite, of Criche, Wimborne, Dorset



Fayer

The Hon. Cynthia Meriel Hill, daughter of Lord and Lady Sandys, of Himbleton Manor, Droitwich, Worcestershire, will shortly marry Mr. Charles Talbot Rhys Wingfield, of Burford, Oxford, son of the late Lt.-Col. M. E. G. R. Wingfield, and of Mrs. Wingfield



McEWEN—LAVER

The marriage took place at Marchmont, Berwickshire, of Mr. Robert Lindley McEwen, second son of Sir John and Lady McEwen, of Marchmont, and Miss Brigid Cecilia Laver, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Laver, of Chelsea

THEY WERE MARRIED The TATLER'S Review



HALL—ROE

Mr. Anthony Hall, son of Major and Mrs. A. C. S. Hall, of Four Walls, Hildenborough, Kent, married Miss Susan Roe, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Roe, of Carfax, Long Road, Cambridge, at the church of St. Mary the Less, Cambridge



STEWART COX—BERTHON

Mr. Thomas Charles Stewart Cox, son of Lt.-Col. and Mrs. A. Stewart Cox, of Little Plumstead Grange, Norwich, and Miss Louise Theodora Berthon, daughter of Rear-Admiral (E) C. P. Berthon, C.B.E., and Mrs. Berthon, of Deddington, Oxford, were married at Deddington Church



LEGGE—DEARBERG

At the church of St. Mary the Virgin, Great Warley, Essex, Mr. Nigel Fawcus Legge, The Middlesex Regt. (D.C.O.), son of Major and Mrs. H. D. Legge, of Pulborough, Sussex, married Miss Elizabeth Fay Dearberg, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. G. Dearberg, of Great Warley



JUDGE—SOUTHERN

Lt. (E) John Charles Judge, R.N., son of the late Mr. C. E. M. Judge, C.I.E., O.B.E., and of Mrs. Judge, of Farnham, Surrey, married Miss Shirley Mellor Southern, daughter of Lt.-Col. W. Southern, I.A. (retd.) and Mrs. Southern, of Guildford, at St. Nicholas Church, Compton

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Books [Continuing from page 44]

The House In The Fens

The scene is the Thames Valley during a torrid summer. The Swinton's riverside, ugly but friendly house, past which puntfuls of trippers go up and down, is neighboured by a pack of odd, seedy people. And upstream is a derelict island, to which is tethered the fatal houseboat. The three Swinton children, together with an alarming visiting school-friend, Wilkins, are untouched by the tragedy of the island: they remain deep in their own affairs—they are, as children, brilliantly drawn, by one who must dread but respect their kind.

Towards the end, the reader finds he has shared a dire suspense. Mr. Mortimer, older than his years, has in *The Narrowing Stream* given us a mature novel.

★ ★ ★

YEW HALL, by Lucy M. Boston (Faber, 10s. 6d.), immediately rivets one, for a pair of eyes look, fixedly and compellingly, through a double-arched window on its dust-cover. The artist—whose name is not given (surely it should be?) deserves praise, for he keys one into the mood of Miss Boston's story.



What is to happen? The owner of a very ancient house, on an island in the Fens, finds herself obliged to share her home with a pair of tenants, Mark and Arabella. The young married couple,

in their allotted rooms, conduct a somehow mysterious existence: the "I" of the story (that is, the widowed mistress of Yew Hall) though determined to be as unaware of them as possible, becomes at once attracted and perplexed. Mark's twin brother, Roger, comes on a visit: something akin to an Elizabethan tragedy ensues.

And not least of the characters in the drama is the house itself. The situation may not sound original, but there is majesty in the telling—in fact, more. There is a touch of genius about Miss Boston's power to write. Here is something completely out of the ordinary. The Fenland landscape and atmosphere, the flood, the first day of spring, the summer party with its terrible moonlight, the timeless fascination of Arabella, the physical entity of Yew Hall—all are brought alive, and are, still more, given a sharp, haunting, poetic beauty. This novel has the stillness of deep-running waters: once read, it demands to be read again, for it gives one a sense of extended vision. If *Yew Hall* meets with anything like the recognition that it deserves, it should travel far.

★ ★ ★

ADAMIRERS of Paul Gallico, since *The Snow Goose*, will do well to seek out his latest miniature masterpiece, *LOVE OF SEVEN DOLLS* (Michael Joseph, 6s.). The gay cover of this very slim volume depicts a French fairground, with a puppet-show in the foreground—and puppets, indeed, are our seven enamoured dolls. Object of their affection? The waif called Mouche,



MR. BENJAMIN BRITTEN, here sitting in the courtyard of the Palazzo Ducale, was in Venice for the world première of his new opera, *The Turn Of The Screw*

far astray since her Brittany childhood. Sinister enemy to poor Mouche's virtue is Capitaine Coq, her employer, who owns the puppets. And the girl herself has that innocent melancholy Mr. Gallico so well knows how to impart—he has never quite lost his affinity to Hans Andersen. From time to time I was a little irked by the mannered Gallisms of the style—however!

There's an allegory, of course. And I must say that *Love Of Seven Dolls* never is what it might have been, simply pretty. That is to say, there are some harsher interludes.

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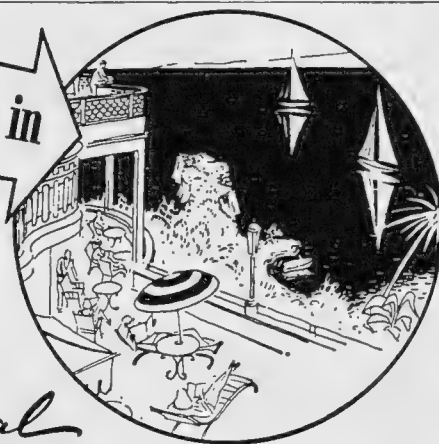
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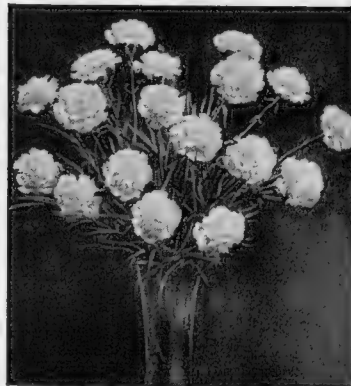
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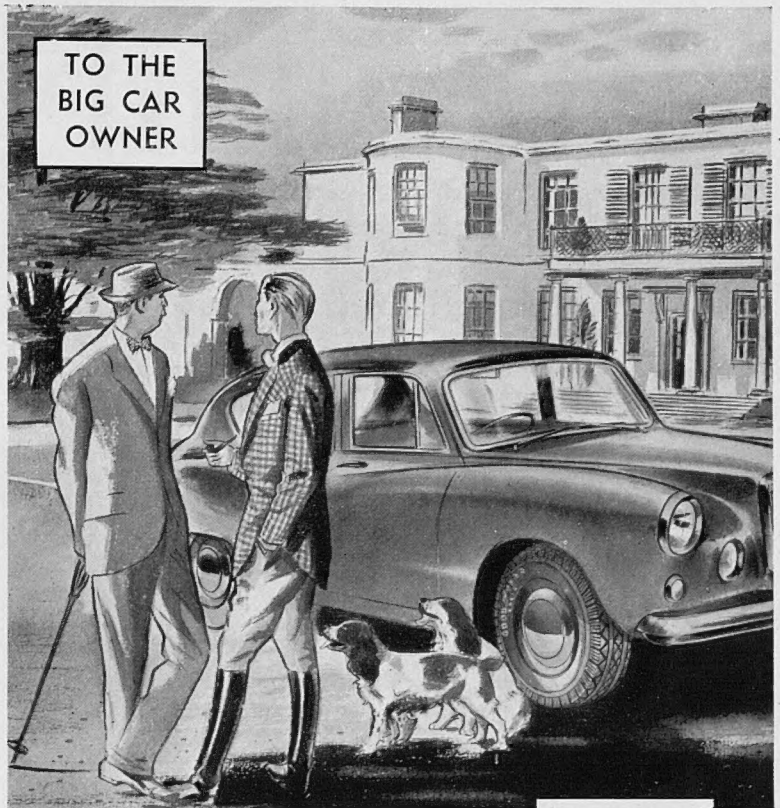


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